

## The Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinic of Padua over the centuries

*To understand a science profoundly,  
it is necessary to know its history.*  
Auguste Comte

In **1700**, Europe changed its policies and started improving patients' care: births, who had always been essentially women's problems, became then the object of interest for politicians and governors. Hence the need for adequate education and training for midwives and obstetricians, and the founding of schools to reduce illegal practice and mothers and children mortality during deliveries.

**France and England** were competing during the century, the first mainly cultivating the operative part and the second with a less interventionist approach.

Also **the Republic of Venice** was dealing with public health and education to limit midwives' illegal practice and to support good physicians against charlatans and empirics. In **Padua**, the very famous School of Medicine saw Leopoldo Marc'Antonio Caldani (1725-1813) as a professor "*de morbis mulierum, puerorum et artificum*" during the academic year 1764-1765. Together with Obstetrics, also Paediatrics and Occupational Medicine were active in Padua.

Yet it is with **Luigi Calza** (1737-1784) that the University discipline of Obstetrics gets a different meaning and orientation. In 1765 Calza, a disciple of Gian Antonio Galli's who was born in Bologna but got his degree in Padua, started his teaching of Obstetrics, of which he was a specifically dedicated scholar.

In **1774** another important step for Obstetrics took place in the Republic of Venice: a private school of Obstetrics was born through a decree by the Reformers of Education. Consequently, the School for Midwives was active near the University Clinic.

As Calza suddenly died, his assistant **Pietro Sografi** (1756-1815) was appointed as his substitute and was then followed by **Vincenzo Malacarne** (1744-1816). From 1817 to 1819 **Cesare Ruggieri** taught Obstetrics as a substituting professor. In 1819, the tenure was won through a selection by **Rudolf Lamprecht** (1781-1860), from the Vienna school. This can be considered the actual beginning of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinic: the teaching of Obstetrics became independent, acquiring scientific features that still today are part of the modern obstetrician. The new Clinic had its location in the 1700 City Hospital, first floor. Lamprecht also founded a Library.

In 1858, **Luigi Pastorello** (1811-1863) was appointed as a tenured professor, then followed by **Michele Frari** (1819-1894).

In 1888, **Marcellino Maggia** (1848-1928) substituted Frari until **Giovanni Inverardi** (1854-1899), from the Turin school, won the tenure position in 1889. With Inverardi, the fusion of the two branches Obstetrics and Gynecology, already existing *de jure* (by law), became *de facto* (in fact) active.

In 1890, the Clinic moved from the narrow rooms of the *Spedale* (Hospital) to a new, independent location.

In 1899 **Ettore Truzzi** (1855-1922), a disciple of Porro's, was appointed as a professor. With Truzzi, an expert in Caesarean sections, the first intervention of this kind was performed in Padua in 1901: the case was a flat rachitic pelvis and turned out into a brilliant result both for mother and fetus.

In 1922, **Alessandro Bertino** (1870-1957) was the tenured professor; in 1940 **Giovanni Battista Revoltella** (1895-1962) substituted him, also attending the building of the new Clinic of Obstetrics, in 1955 (project by architect Giulio Brunetta).

In 1962, **Giuseppe Vecchietti** (1914-1990) followed; in 1968, **Alberto Centaro** (1922-1974), from the Florence school.

In 1974, **Antonio Omnis** (b.1927) became the tenured professor, then followed by **Pasquale Grella** (b.1933).

From 1999 to 2008, **Antonio Ambrosini** directed the Department of Gynecological and Human Reproduction Sciences and the Gynecology and Obstetrics Unit.

From 2009 to 2010, **Mario Rondinelli** was the Director of the Department of Gynecological and Human Reproduction Sciences.

From 2011 to 2012, **Giovanni Battista Nardelli, the present Director of the Gynecology and Obstetrics Unit**, has been the Director of the Department of Gynecological and Human Reproduction Sciences. Professor Nardelli has also managed the application of the University reform of the medical and hospital disciplines.

Since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, the University Reform has actually established the incorporation of several Departments, hence the fusion of the Department of Gynecological and Human Reproduction Sciences and the Department of Pediatrics into the Department of Women's and Children's Health. During the years 2012-2015 the new Department is being directed by Giovanni Franco Zanon, Professor of Pediatric Surgery.

Since January, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, the Reform of the National Health Service has also established the Experimental Integrated Care Departments (DAIS – Dipartimenti Assistenziali Intergrati Sperimentali), among which the **Department of Women's and Children's Health**. For the years 2012-2015, the General Director of Padua University Hospital has appointed Giorgio Perilongo, Professor of Pediatrics, as Director of the Department.

Furthermore, since January, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, the University Reform has established the abolition of the Dean of the Faculty, of all the University Faculties, and the Council of the Faculty Members.

Eight new Departments have been established:

- Medicine
- Molecular Medicine
- Neurosciences
- Women's and Children's Health
- Biomedical Sciences
- Cardiology, Chest and Vascular Sciences
- Surgery, Oncology and Gastroenterology Sciences
- Drug Sciences.

On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Departments have elected the President of the new MEDICAL SCHOOL, Professor Santo Davide Ferrara, who coordinates the following University Courses:

3- YEAR DEGREE COURSE

ONE-TERM MAGISTRAL DEGREE COURSE

MAGISTRAL DEGREE COURSE

ACTIVE EDUCATIONAL TRAINING